



American Center Pop-Up
January 30, 2018;
11:30 - 13:45
North South University (NSU)

Mr. Mohammed Shajahan, Chair of the Board of Trustees;

Professor Dr. Gias Ahsan, Pro Vice Chancellor;

Dr. Katherine Li, Director of the Office of External Affairs;

Daniel Rosenblum, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State;

North South University students, faculty, administrators, and staff:

Assalam-u-Alaikum, nomoshkar, shubo shokal and good morning!

I am excited to be at NSU today to launch our first American Center Pop-Up of 2018! Thank you all for welcoming Deputy Assistant Secretary Rosenblum, my staff, and me to your campus.

We chose to come to NSU because we know all of you, like so many American university students and faculty, value life-long learning, leadership, social justice, diversity, and tolerance—which makes an NSU education invaluable. I'm proud to say that many members of my Embassy team are NSU alumni. In fact, at one point my son thought about attending NSU! Your university is known as a center of excellence throughout Bangladesh and the world.

This morning we've come to NSU not only to share our American Center programs and resources, but to highlight the importance of people-to-people, citizen-to-citizen, and university-to-university relationships.

Today we can connect instantly through Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, and Facebook. Of course, I hope you all follow the U.S. Embassy on Facebook—we are proud to be able to connect regularly with our more than five million followers. But we should never underestimate the value of in-person human



interaction and the importance of building lasting relationships with one another. These are the connections that ground our two peoples and the U.S.-Bangladesh relationship—and building these relationships is at the heart of all of our American Center programs.

The American Center Dhaka is part of the U.S. Embassy and includes six American Spaces, three EducationUSA Advising Centers, countless programs, grant opportunities, and exchanges. Whether you are at the American Center across the street from the Embassy, at the Edward M. Kennedy Center in Dhanmondi, or one of our American Corners in Rajshahi, Chittagong, Khulna, or Sylhet, we want to make sure that you have access to American literature, music, film, and much more.

If you want to participate in programs that promote sustainability, gender equality, social responsibility, English language learning, or entrepreneurship, you can come to the American Center. If you've dreamed of attending a U.S. university for a master's degree or PhD, our EducationUSA advisors are here to provide guidance every step of the way. If you are passionate about innovation and technology, our MakerSpace offers courses on everything from basic coding to 3D printing. And if you would benefit from a student, academic, or professional exchange program, the American Center offers nearly two dozen no-cost exchanges.

I would like to ask my staff to please raise your hands, everyone from the U.S. Embassy. The people you see with their hands up run and support our American Center programs or are part of our Consular Section who manage our visa programs. Today, they are all here for you.

Ask Tahniah about our emerging leader exchanges for undergraduate-level students. Shaheen manages our academic exchanges, so professors and researchers can learn about Fulbright and other academic exchanges from her. If you are an English major, an English professor, or just want to improve your skills, Raihana can tell you about all of our free American English resources. Kelly is here to talk to you about EducationUSA and our free advising services for anyone who wants to pursue higher studies at a U.S. university. Nick, Julie, Bashar, Shahina, and Bimol are here to explain all of the programs and resources offered by the Archer K. Blood Library. And Sharon, David, April, Fahad, and Kashfi are here to answer questions about the visa process.



All of our programs are meant to deepen your understanding of American culture, give you the opportunity to experience the United States, and, through our exchange programs, give Americans opportunities to meet Bangladeshis and learn more about your culture.

Earlier I mentioned that we want to highlight the importance of people-to-people, citizen-to-citizen, and university-to-university relationships. Through our American Center and U.S. Embassy programs more than 3,500 Bangladeshis have participated in U.S. State Department exchange programs. This includes Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding President of Bangladesh, who participated in what is now the International Visitor Leadership Program nearly two decades before Bangladesh's independence; Fulbright alumnus and Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus; and the current Speaker of Parliament Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury.

Over the past three consecutive years, through the American Center, we have successfully nominated strong and groundbreaking Bangladeshi women to receive the International Woman of Courage Award – journalist Nadia Sharmin, lawyer Sara Hossain – and human rights activist Sharmin Akter. Since returning from the U.S they have gone on to mentor our American Center Girls' Club and start mobile legal aid clinics for some of Bangladesh's most underserved citizens.

Thanks in large part to EducationUSA and to our Consular Section, I'm proud to say that this year, the doors to U.S. colleges and universities are open wider to Bangladeshi students than ever before. This year a record 7,143 Bangladeshi students are pursuing higher education in the United States. Bangladesh is now among the top 25 countries sending students to U.S. colleges and universities and is ranked 9th in the world for sending graduate-level students.

Today we have come to NSU to invite you to take advantage of all that the American Center has to offer. We know NSU has amazing and talented students and faculty. Today is your opportunity to learn how the American Center can help you build on your talents and passions; to build on what you've learned here at NSU; and to continue your life-long learning, leadership, and commitment to social justice, diversity, and tolerance.

Thank you all once again for inviting us to your campus!